



## Jayadeva, the Poet and his Times

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While introducing the immortal work, the *Gitagovinda*, Jayadeva invokes the attention of the lovers of poetry in the following verses :

“Yadi Harismarane sarasam mano yadi  
vilasakalasu kutuhalam  
Madhura komalakantapadavali srnu tada  
Jayadeva Sarasvatim.”

(*Gitagovinda* , Chapter-I, canto-3)

“If your heart fills with sublime joy at the utterance of Lord Hari’s name, if you take delight in poetry and artistic creations, endowed with soft, sweet, delicate and musical expressions of high poetical excellence, you are cordially invited to go through the verses of Jayadeva, which may be considered to have come out from the lips of Sarasvati, the goddess of music and learning.”

In the following verses the poet comments upon Umapatidhara, Sarana, Govardhana Acharya and Kaviraja Dhoyi and the poetic value of their works.

“Vachah pallavayatyumapatidharah  
sandarvasuddhim giram  
Janite Jayadeva eva Saranah slaghyo  
duruhadruteh  
Srngarottarasa prameyarachanairacharya  
Govardhanam  
Spardhi koapi na visrtah srtidharo, Dhoyi  
Kaviksmapatih.”

(*Gitagovinda*, Chapter I, canto-4)

“Umapatidhara’s poetry lacked spontaneity, word choice and poetic diction and therefore did not appeal to lovers of poetry. The writings of Saran were clumsy and prosaic and far from entertaining. Though unrivalled in writing poetry on passionate love, Govardhana lacked the talent to write on other topics of poetic beauty. The title of *Acharya* before his name was only a mockery. Srtidhara Dhoyi, though a scholar, did not possess the poetic skill in rhythmic expression and word choice and the title of *Kaviraja* before his name was nothing but the outcome of this own vanity. This observation has been recorded in the commentary *Rasa Manjari* by Mahamahopadhyaya Sankar Misra.

In the *Gitagovinda* there is no mention of these poets being under any royal patronage. We give below brief descriptions of the lives and achievements of these poets.

### UMAPATIDHARA

Umapatidhara was a minister in the court of the Sen dynasty, who had composed the *Deopara Prasasti* of Vijaya Sen (Inscription of Bengal, Vol. III, p. 49) and Umapatidhara referred to in the *Gitagovinda* may be one and the same person. This eulogy records the war between Vijaya Sen and Raghav Deva (A.D. 1156-1170), the Ganga emperor of Kalinga and



contains at the end the name of Umapatidhara. It is quite probable that this eulogy might have been composed between A.D. 1156-1158. The 7<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> *sloka*s of this eulogy have been mentioned in the *Sadukti Karnamrtam* as mentioned in the *History of Bengal* published by Dacca University. Another *sloka* of Umapatidhara resembling the 4<sup>th</sup> *sloka* of the copper plate inscription of Madhainagar has been quoted here. It can be said that Umapatidhara was in the court of Sen kings. It has been described in the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter of the *Prabandha Chintamani* composed in A.D. 1304 that Umapatidhara, the minister of the Gauda king Laksmāna Sen was very wise and intelligent. While going to explain the *sloka*, “*Vachah pallavayati .....* ” in his *Rasa Manjari*, a commentary on the *Gitagovinda*, Mahamahopadhyaya Sankar Misra writes : “*Umapatidhara namna Laksmānasenamatyō vachah pallavayati vistarayati*” etc.

### SARANA

There is only one *sloka* found in the *Sadukti Karnamrta* in praise of Sarana. No other writing on this poet has yet been discovered. There is also no authentic record on the native place of the poet and his date of birth. There is no evidence of Sarana being in the court of Laksmāna Sen.

### GOVARDHANA

In his *Aryasaptasati*, (Published in Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series) Govardhana Acharya speaks very highly of the poetic talent of Sen king Pravara Sen of Vakataka clan, the famous writer of the *Setubandha* or *Ravana Baho*. This dynasty ruled in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D. Acharya Dandi, in his famous treatise on poetics known as *Kavyadarsa* and his fiction *Avanti Sundari Katha* speaks very highly of the poetic beauty of the *Setubandha* of Pravara Sen. Pandit Ananta of Maharashtra, the famous

commentator of the *Arya Saptasati* supports this view in the *Byangartha Dipika*. The description “*Senakulatilaka*” also appeared in the original book by Halo, from which *Arya Saptasati* was translated and hence it could not have referred to Laksmāna Sen at all.

“*Kumudavanavandhoschandrasya sadasakalahkalayitum vaktum, kartum va pakse darsayitum senakulatilaka bhupatih setukarta Pravarasenanamaraja, pauramasipradosa ekah prabhuh samarthah, nanya ityarthah.*”

The Malava king Arjunavarma Deva (A.D. 1211-1215) has quoted only one *sloka* from the *Arya Saptasati* in his *Amarusatakam* commentary. But Sridhara Das, the court poet of Laksmāna Sen, has not quoted even a single *sloka* from the *Arya Saptasati* in his *Sadukti Karnamrtam* composed in A.D. 1205. There might be a simple mention of the name of Govardhana. It is indeed strange that Sridhara Das was ignorant of such a renowned scholar and had simply heard his name from the people.

In his *Arya Saptasati* Govardhana has expressed his gratitude to his two younger brothers Udayana and Balabhadra. Udayana Acharya was a great scholar of the then Kalinga. He had composed the eulogy inscribed on the Sobhanesvara temple, located at Niali and Meghesvara temple of Bhubaneswar. He was the court poet of Brahmin feudatory Chief Vaidyanatha of Bhujangam Puri and latter graced the court of Svapnesvara Deva, the Feudatory Chief of Bhubaneswar and brother-in-law of the Ganga emperor Raja Raja Deva (A.D. 1170-1190). In the stone inscription of Meghesvara temple at Bhubaneswar he has described in 11 *sloka*s the glorious achievement of Chodaganga Deva, Raja Raja Deva and Aniyanka Bhima Deva of Ganga dynasty. In the *History of Bengal*



published by the Dacca University it has been accepted that Govardhana, the writer of the *Arya Saptasati* and Udayana are two brothers and Udayana was the first commentator of the *Gitagovinda* entitled *Bhava vibhavani*. Dr. F. Keilhorn came across this commentary in a peasant's home in Madhya Pradesh in A.D. 1874 and carried on research on it. Kaviraja Udayana had made a commentary on the *Naisadhiya Charita* of Sriharsa and named it *Udayakari*. Govardhana Acharya stayed at Puri and has composed the *Govardhana Sataka* in praise of Lord Jagannatha. Unfortunately there is no trace of this book now.

### KAVIRAJA DHOYI

Kaviraja Dhoyi had composed *Pavanadutam* in Sanskrit in initiation of the famous *Meghadutam* by Kalidas. By the time of Laksmāna Sen, the capital of Kalinga was shifted to Yajatinagar on the bank of river Mahanadi. Chodagangadeva had shifted his capital from Kalinganagar on the river Vansadhara to Yajatinagar or Nagari Kataka in the second decade of 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D. and had started living with his family there after 1126 A.D. Dhoyi's *Pavanadutam* refers to Kalinganagar as the capital of Kalinga. This means that Dhoyi must have written *Pavanadutam* before 1126 A.D., which makes him a contemporary of Vijaya Sena and not Laksmāna Sen who ruled from A.D. 1176 to A.D. 1205. He would not have confused the name of a neighbouring State like this.

Assuming but not admitting that all these four poets belonged to the court of Laksmāna Sen, had Jayadeva been one of the court poets of Laksmāna Sen he would never have looked low upon the poetic ability of the above mentioned poets nor would he have condemned the writings of his own colleagues. Criticism on the court poets would mean insubordination to the king and was

to be considered a challenge to the king's authority as a result of which one could not expect to remain in his kingdom. So it is far from truth that Jayadeva was a poet in the court of Laksmāna Sen. The poetic genius that Jayadeva was, he did not have to make efforts like this in his book to establish his relative superiority over these much less known poets.

Again this *sloka* of Jayadeva is a start deviation from the established poetic tradition of that age. The great poets of India followed the principle enumerated in Kalidasa's *Raghuvamśa*: "*Athava krtavagdvarevanseasmin purvasuribhih*". They sang the praise of the poetic creations of their predecessors while going to highlight the poetics of their own writings. But condemning the contemporary poets was unknown to Indian literature of that age. Having said, "*Srunu yada Jayadeva Sarasvatim*" in praise of his own poetic skill in this *sloka*, he goes to decry in the next *sloka* the five poets said to be belonging to Laksmāna Sen's court. If at all they adorned the court of Laksmāna Sen how is it that Jayadeva did not even mention the name of king Laksmāna Sen once in the *Gitagovinda*? The above five poets referred to in this *sloka* specialized in five different themes. As the *Gitagovinda* of Jayadeva deals with love episode of Radha and Kṛṣṇa, how could Jayadeva admit his own inferiority in composing poetry on Sringara, if he said that Govardhana Acharya was unrivalled in writing on sex or Sringara.

In the second *sloka* that is *Vachapallavayati* ..... Jayadeva claims to have knowledge of *Sandharvasuddhi* which means clarity in composition. In Sanskrit, scholars have explained the word *Sandharva* as *Sandorta Grantha*. This word has been derived from Sanskrit root *drutah* which means weaving. So *Vak Sandarva* means the skill of sewing or



weaving words in a proper rhythm and sequence. A sentence has two aspects – one is the word contained and the other is the depth of feelings expressed. So if *Sandarva* is taken to be a literary piece of musical verses, the sweetness and appropriateness of words used, the feelings they stand for, the intensity of thought, the style of expression, the manner and sequence of the ideas dealt with accompanied with rhyme and poetic diction come under its purview. Considering from this viewpoint let us now see how far this *sloka* itself maintains *Sandarva Suddhi*.

As discussed earlier, this *sloka* does not maintain the poetic tradition of paying regards to the earlier poets. On the other hand this *sloka* condemns the contemporary poets. Let us take into consideration the expression. “*Saranaslaghyo duruhadrute*” in this *sloka*. The commentators have almost explained this as *Duruhasya duruha kavyasya drute druta rachane*. In a *sasthi tatpurusa* compound it was not the practice to use adjectives which are not as extraordinary as the first and second word of *tatpurusa* compound. It was not in use in language like Odia, Bengali and Hindi derived from Sanskrit, not to speak of Sanskrit grammar. So *Sandarva Suddhi* has not been maintained in these verses either in proper use of words or their underlying meaning. So it is difficult to say how this *sloka* found place in the original *Gitagovinda*.

The commentators of latter times have of course explained these verses. But these appear to be interpolations. The *Saduktikarnamrtam* is only a collection of extracts from the works of poets very familiar among the then people. The court poet Sridhara Das of Laksmāna Sen was the publisher of this literary collection. It is learnt from the *Dan Sagara* composed by Balala Sen, father of Laksmāna Sen, that in the *Saka* era A.D.

1091 or A.D. 1169 the editing of *Saduktikarnamrtam* was started and completed in the 17<sup>th</sup> regnal year of Laksmāna Sen. Balala Sen had taken up composing a scripture entitled *Adbhuta Sagara* in *Saka* era 1090 or A.D. 1168 which was completed after Laksmāna Sen has ascended the throne.

There is historical controversy in regard to the date of his coronation to the throne. In the opinion of the compiler of *Visvakosa* he had ascended the throne in A.D. 1199 and having been vanquished by the Muslim invaders fled away. Some other say that he had ascended the throne in the *Saka* era 1090 or A.D. 1169. Again there is another opinion that having ascended the throne during A.D. 1178-84 he ruled till A.D. 1204-05. Whatever it might be, the compilation of the *Saduktikarnamrtam* had begun in the reign of the king Balala Sen. This collection has been divided into 5 *pravahas* (streams). These are *Deva Pravaha*, *Srngar Pravaha*, *Chatu Pravaha*, *Apadesa Pravaha* and *Ucha Pravaha*. From among them in the 59<sup>th</sup> *Vichi* (wave) of the *Deva Pravaha* the 4<sup>th</sup> *sloka* reproduces the 78<sup>th</sup> *sloka* of the *Gitagovinda* reading ‘*Jayasri Vinyastairmahita iv amandarakusumaih*’ etc. which is the concluding stanza of the 11<sup>th</sup> canto. In the *Srngar Pravaha* 80<sup>th</sup> *sloka* of the 12<sup>th</sup> canto of the *Gitagovinda* constitutes the 4<sup>th</sup> stanza of the 132<sup>th</sup> *Vichi* (wave) which begins with, ‘*Pratyuhah pulakankurena nivasasle nimisena cha*’. The 43<sup>rd</sup> concluding *sloka* of the 6<sup>th</sup> canto of the *Gitagovinda*. “*Angesvabharanam, karoti vahusah patreapi sancharini*” etc. constitutes the 4<sup>th</sup> stanza of 37<sup>th</sup> *Vichi*. Again the 81<sup>st</sup> of the *Gitagovinda* beginning with “*Maranke ratikeli sankularanarambhe taya sahasa*” etc. constitutes the 4<sup>th</sup> stanza of 37<sup>th</sup> *Vichi*. The 83<sup>rd</sup> *sloka* of the *Gitagovinda* “*Tasyah patala panijankitamure nidrakasaye drsau*” is reproduced as the 5<sup>th</sup> stanza of 137<sup>th</sup> *Vichi*.



From the above it is learnt that in the very first stream of the *Saduktikarnamrtam* the last *sloka* of the 11<sup>th</sup> canto of the *Gitagovinda* containing 12 cantos has been quoted. So it is sure that this has been produced in the compilation of the *Saduktikarnamrtam* which was started in the reign of Balala Sen. It is therefore clear that the *Gitagovinda* had already gained popularity and admiration before the reign of Balala Sen. And its composition had also been completed by that time. That Jayadeva had composed the *Gitagovinda* during the reign of Laksmāna Sen is not based on truth.

There are 72 *slokas* in all in the *Gitagovinda*. The verses “*Jayasri Vinyastairmahita iva mandarakusumaiḥ*” etc. quoted in the *Saduktikarnamrtam* as *slokas* from the *Gitagovinda* are considered to be interpolations. Many commentators have not accepted the *sloka* as it is none of the 72 *slokas* in the original text of the *Gitagovinda*. It has been discussed elsewhere how the interpolated verses mingled with the royal edition of the *Gitagovinda* have found a place in the original text. It has to be ascertained first when these interpolated *slokas* were composed and how these found a place in the *Gitagovinda*. The interpolated *slokas* with the four original *slokas* of the *Gitagovinda* were included in the *Saduktikarnamrtam* much later. Had Jayadeva been the court poet of Laksmāna Sen and a contemporary of Sridhar Das, the compiler of the *Saduktikarnamrtam*, the above *slokas* would never have been condemned by the commentators of later times.

The question that comes up next for consideration is that in the same *Saduktikarnamrtam* some *slokas* said to be composed by Jayadeva in praise of a king have been included. Among them the oft-quoted *sloka* is :

“*Laksmikeli bhujanga jangamahare  
sankalpa kalpadrma*”

*Sreyah sadhkasanga sangarakalagangeya  
vamsapriya (vangapriya),*

*Gaudendra pratiraja rajakasabhalankara  
karnarpita*

*Pratyatha ksitipala palakasatam  
drstoasi tusta vayah*”

This means :

‘O thou movable deity of Hari, Laksmi’s Consort, O thou wish-fulfilling tree of the supplicants, O symbol of bliss and happiness, O the dear one of the king of Gana dynasty. O mighty one, O king of the kingdom of Gauda, O jewel in the crown feudatory princes, O the slayer of the enemies and the patron of the saints, O benevolent lord, we are blessed indeed at the sight of your ‘Majesty’.

Instead of singing in praise of any royal power, Jayadeva devoted his life to sing the glory of Lord Jagannath, the Lord of the universe. It is quite impossible that such a dauntless poet and a staunch devotee of Lord Jagannatha like Jayadeva could stoop so low as to compose the above *sloka* glorifying an earthly king.

Hundreds of poets and scholars visited the royal courts with eulogical *slokas* in honour of the kings with a view to obtaining gifts and rewards. In the above *sloka* it has not been mentioned as to which of the Gouda kings has been honoured and glorified. So it is not understood as to how Jayadeva was identified as the court poet of Laksmāna Sen who wrote this.

If at all this *sloka* was composed in the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D. it might very well have been a eulogy glorifying a Ganga king. It was originally Gangeya “*vansapriya*” meaning dear one of Ganga (dynasty) Vansa. Instead of Vansapriya it has been written by some as “*Rangapriya*” for some *sloka*



meaning thereby a King of Ganga dynasty fond of art and music. Some others replaced 'msa' with "nga" meaning Vangapriya meaning dear to Bengal. If 'r' is substituted in place of 'v' in 'Vangapriya' the word will be 'Rangapriya'. The word 'Gangeya' might have been derived from the Ganga dynasty and refers to Ganga emperors. It is widely known that the Ganga emperors of Kalinga bore the title 'Gaudesvara' before their names. Sen kings were not Gangaya or belonging to Ganga dynasty. *Rangapriya* stands for lover of art, music and entertainment. Even now the Gajapati kings of Odisha bear this dignifying title. This title along with others are 'Vira Sri Gajapati Gaudesvara Navakoti Karnatorkala Kalavargesvara Viradhi Viravara' etc. This title along with the name of particular Gajapati king and his regnal year are incorporated in the horoscope of every Odia. There is another interpretation. 'Vamsapriya' was the original word used meaning thereby that the king of Bengal was dear to the kings of Ganga dynasty of Kalinga after their treaty to fight the Palo dynasty together. There was no princely state called "Banga" during 12<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore instead of "Bangapriya" it could well be "Rangapriya" or *Vamsapriya*.

In hundreds of eulogies singing the praise of kings nowhere else has it been found that a king has accepted such titles as 'Kalingapriya', 'Karnatapriya', 'Vangapriya' etc. It can be firmly established that Jayadeva the poet of the *Gitagovinda* was not the writer of this eulogy. According to Dr. Satyanarayan Rajguru, the words Gangeya Vamsapriya have been wrongly interpreted by some as dear to the dynasty of Bhishma, who was addressed as Gangeya (son of Ganga) in the Mahabharat. This *sloka* has been taken out of some eulogy to a Ganga king and reported as having been composed by Jayadeva. It is more interesting to note that Dr. Prasanta

Kumar Dasgupta changed the words "Gangeya Vamsapriya" to Gangeya Bangapriya in his book *Jayadeva And Some of His Contemporaries* (pages 15-16).

According to Kedarnath Mohapatra, it is more likely that some court poet might have composed this eulogy and presented it to Chodaganga Deva who had assumed the title Gaudendra, ruler of Gauda after he had defeated the Palos at Mandargada. The word Bangapriya is an impossibility because such words nowhere else appear in any other eulogical *sloka*. No king ever liked to be addressed as loving only his own subjects or own state or even a conquered state. Chodangadeva, himself belonging to Ganga Vamsa could not be described as Ganga Vansa Priya, or "dear to Ganga dynasty".

The Ganga kings claimed their descent from the Pandavas who belonged to the family of Bhishma, the son of Ganga and called Gangeya in the Mahabharat. Vijaya Sen had made friendship with Chodaganga Deva and in all likelihood he could have been addressed as 'Gangeya Vamsapriya' or dear to the Ganga Vamsi kings. A Sena king could not have been described in any eulogical verse as being Gaudendra and Bangapriya at the same time. Therefore in either case the word is not Bangapriya. It is 'Vamsapriya' or 'Rangapriya' and most likely addressed to King Vijayasen.

Chand Baradai (Chandrakavi) in his work the *Prthviraj Raso* written in old Rajasthani language has followed the footprints of eight poets of whom Jayadeva has been accepted as the 8<sup>th</sup> poet.

"Kavi kitti kirtti bhakati sudikkhi  
Ninaiki uchasthi kavichandra bhakkhi  
Jayadeva athatham kavi kabirayam  
Jinaim kevalam kitti Govinda gayam"



Chand Baradai was the contemporary of the last independent Hindu king Prthviraj A.D. 1169-1192 of Chauhan dynasty. Many important and interesting events of the reign of Prthviraj have been recorded in his *Raso*. Here salutations have been paid to the ten incarnations of the Lord in imitation of the *Gitagovinda*. Chand Baradai was contemporary of Laksmāna Sen, the king of Gauda and Sridhara Das, compiler of the *Saduktikarnamrtam*. So it goes without saying that in the distant Rajasthan region the *Gitagovinda* had already earned popularity and admiration before Chand Baradai offered his salutations to Jayadeva. Much before the composition of *Prthviraj Raso*, the *Gitagovinda* was familiar among the people and it is sure that it must have been completed before the *Raso*.

The main reason of the quick popularity of the *Gitagovinda* in the distant Rajasthan regions centers around Puri, the abode of Lord Jagannath. It may be that the pilgrims coming to Puri for a visit of Lord Jagannath must have been fascinated by the charming melody of the *Gitagovinda*, sung before the Lord in the temple as an indispensable item of daily worship and might have carried in memory as well as in palm leaf its enchanting eloquence to the distant corners of Rajasthan. This is certain that after the introduction of the singing of the *Gitagovinda* in the ritual services of Lord Jagannath, it spread like wild fire to every nook and corner of India.

It has been described in *Prthviraj Raso* that Sri Vijaya Pala king of Kanyakubja during his campaign to the Deccan had arrived at Odisha and received the hospitality of Mukunda Deva, the emperor of Soma (Kesari) dynasty and devotee of Lord Jagannath. There is also mention of the marriage of the eldest son of Vijaya Pala's daughter with the daughter of Mukunda Deva.

In the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D. an anthology compiled by Vidyakhara Pandit named *Subhasita Ratnakosa* includes in it two *slokas* written by one Jayadeva by name, the 1567<sup>th</sup> *sloka* of this anthology has been repeated in the *Saduktikarnamrtam* as its 1538<sup>th</sup> *sloka*. Jayadeva the poet of the *Gitagovinda* and Jayadeva of *Subhasita Ratnakosa* are not one and the same person. (Sri Jayadeva O Sri *Gitagovinda* , p. 235)

In the preface of the text *Saktimuktavali* composed by Jahlan in A.D. 1275, it has been mentioned that the dramatist of the *Prasanna Raghava* had composed the *sloka Laksmikeli Bhujanga* etc. in praise of a Sena king of Bengal.

#### SEKASUBHODAYA :

*Sekasubhodaya* written by one Halayudha Misra describes the holy coming of the Seikh to Bengal. The Seikh belonged to the kingdom of Attava. While proceeding to the east on his mission to preach Islam he entered into the kingdom of Bengal. At that time Laksmāna Sen was the king of Bengal.

The Seikh possessed many supernatural powers. He could go wherever he liked putting on the enchanted sandals. He built his *asrama* close to the palace of Laksmāna Sen. Knowing the motive of the Seikh and apprehending danger Umapatidhara, the minister of Laksmāna Sen tried to poison him to death. But Seikh could save himself by reading *Namaj* in a thundering voice. It was reported that the Seikh has saved the life of a washerman from the attack of three tigers. He could also save through his magic powers three ships of a merchant named Prabhakar at the point of sinking in the sea.

Once Kumardutta, brother-in-law of the king, having entered into a rich merchant's house molested his young wife Madhavi. The merchant



and his wife complained before the king. But the queen advocated her brother's cause and beat Madhavi clutching her by lock of her hair. But Jagatguru Govardhanacharya who happened to be present there scolded the king and threatened to curse him. Out of anger he was about to leave the place with his staff and *kamandalu* (water pot of an ascetic), but the king lay prostrate at his feet and pacified him. The Seikh had brought in a compromise.

At the machinations of Umapatidhara four persons went in disguise to the Seikh for causing him an injury. But they had to lose their eye sight. After a lot of entreaties the Seikh had withdrawn the curse and they got back their eyesight.

Another episode goes like this :-

Once a musician named Budhan Misra had come to the royal court of Laksmana Sen. As he was an adept in the art of music, Kapilesvara Deva, the Gajapati emperor of Odisha had granted him the title of *Sadachandra Gaja Jayapatra*. When he sang in the *Patta Manjari* tune all the leaves of the Pipal tree close by fell down. All present praised Budhan Misra very highly. Padmavati, Jayadeva's wife, while coming after a bath in the Ganga heard the praises and applause. Laksmana Sen announced to reward Budhan Misra with a letter of commendation. Appearing at the royal court she demanded before the king that no commendation should be given to anybody unless he excels her and her husband in music.

The Seikh who was present there requested Padmavati to sing. On his request Padmavati sang *Gandhara* tune so sweetly that all the boats sailing in the Ganges came ashore. All were amazed to see the boats moving like animate creatures. The Seikh asked Budhan Misra to face a competition with Padmavati. But

as he did not agree for a competition with a woman the Seikh proposed to summon Jayadeva to the royal court. On his arrival Jayadeva asked Budhan Misra to make new leaves sprout up on the Pipal tree by his musical talent. But as Budhan Misra declined, Jayadeva sang in *Vasanta Raga* and new leaves sprouted forth. At the advice of the Seikh, Budhan Misra was given only some minor presents but no letter of commendation. The stories reveal many extraordinary tricks of the Seikh, his mission to construct mosques and preach Islam and his mediatorship in settling up difference in royal courts.

If we examine the truth in the above story, it will appear to be a fabricated one for the following reasons :-

**A.** Kapilesvara Deva, more popularly known as Kapilendra Deva, the Gajapati Emperor of the then Orissa, ruled from A.D. 1435-1467 that is after more than 250 years of the reign of Laksmana Sen. So the question arises as to how Gajapati Kapilesvara Deva granted the testimonial 'Sadachandra Gaja' to a musician of the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

**B.** Laksmana Sen was an orthodox Hindu king who was opposed to Muslim rule and had to flee away in A.D. 1205 after he was defeated. It is not understood how he was believed to be a patron of Islam. There was a gap of only 13 years from the fall of Prithviraj Chauhan of Delhi in 1192 and the fall of Laxman Sen of Bengal in 1205. There is no record of any Islamic dictating terms in the Court of a Hindu King. Unless he was already a vassal prince under an Islam Emperor, Laxman Sen could never give a prominent place to a preacher of Islam in his kingdom and Durbar. Historically this possibility is far from the truth.

**C.** Nowhere it has been mentioned even in this book that Jayadeva had adorned the court of Laksmana Sen. Had the superiority of Padmavati





and her husband in music known to the king or the Seikh, there was hardly any necessity for Padmavati to prove her proficiency in the royal court. Again it is absurd to believe that Padmavati, a devoted lady of high culture and musical proficiency intruded upon the royal court in a challenging manner on her way from the river Ganges after a bath. Moreover, how could Laksmana Sen hold his court below a Pipal tree from where river Ganga was visible is not known.

**D.** Then another character Govardhana Acharya appears in the story as a travelling mendicant. Govardhan Acharya belonged to Niali in Cuttack district and was a poet scholar.

It can be emphatically said that the scripture *Sekasubhodaya* is not based on any truth. Dr. Sukumar Sen, while commenting on this story has said: "It indicates that Jayadeva did not originally belong to the court of Laksmana Sen and that he had first come there as an outsider." (*Sekasubhodaya* of Halayudha Misra – Edited by Dr. Sukumar Sen and published by Asiatic Society, Introduction p. vii)

### The stone inscription :

In the *Birbhum Vivarana* by Harekrnsna Mukhopadhaya reference has been made to a stone inscription supporting the fact that Jayadeva was the court poet of Laksmana Sen as reported to have been seen by Sri Rupa and Sri Sanatana Gosvamis of Sridhama Nadia. The *sloka* reads as follows :

"Govardhanascha Sarano Jayadeva Umapatih  
Kavirajascha ratnani panchaite Laksmantasya cha"

This means – Govardhana, Sarana, Jayadeva, Umapati and Kaviraja were the five gems in the court of Laksmana Sen.

Nowhere in their writings Sri Rupa and Sri Sanatan had mentioned about this stone inscription. Again Rupa and Sanatan lived after

more than 320 years of the reign of Laksmana Sen. After the conquest of the kingdom of Laksmana Sen by the Muslim Commander Muhammed-i-Bakhtyar, the city of Nadia was completely desolated. In the book *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* there is mention of this in A.D. 1260.

"After Muhummad-i-Bakhtyar possessed himself of that territory (Rae Laksmania's) he left the city of Nudiah in desolation" ! On the foot notes of the page this has been mentioned "Muhammed-i-Bakhtyar destroyed Nudiah and leaving it in desolation passed onwards." (*Tabaqat-I-Nasiri*, translated by Raverty, p. 550)"

In such circumstances it is beyond one's comprehension as to how Rupa and Sanatana could come across the above stone inscription at the entrance of the royal palace of Laksmana Sen. None of the old scriptures mention about it. Moreover, history has nowhere recorded Nadia to be the capital of Laksmana Sen.

### The court of king of Odisha and Jayadeva :

In A.D. 1563 Kesav Misra, the court poet of king Manik Chandra of the kingdom of Kotkangra, has quoted a *sloka* of Govardhana in his 'Alankara Sekhara'. From this it is learnt that Jayadeva was a crown of all other poets and scholars adorning the court of the king of Utkala. The *sloka* reads as follows :

"Prak-pratyak prthivibhrtah parisadi  
prakhyata sankhyavata  
Mahnaayadbhatatarka- karkasataya  
vichhidya vidyamadam  
Ye keapyutkalabhupate! tavaabha sambhavitah panditah  
Patram Sri Jayadev panditkaviv stanmuddhi vinyasyati"

It means – "O king of Utkala, of all the scholars of your court who command great respect and admiration by crushing the pride of all other scholars in the courts of the kings of the east and the west who indulge in putting forth dry



and argumentative discourses, Jayadeva puts on the terminal of victory over them as the greatest poet.”

Besides the above *sloka*, Kesava Misra in his *Alankar Sekhara* has quoted from Govardhana one *sloka* from each of the *Sabdalanakara* (word-ornament) and *Arthalankara* (meaning ornament) sections and eight *slokas* describing the beauty of women, Govardhana, the writer in the *Alankara Sekhara* and Govardhana, the writer of the *Aryasaptasati* are one and the same person.

Poet Madhava Patnaik a contemporary of Sri Chaitanya and author of Chaitanya Vitas in his *Vaisnava Lilamrta* written in the 48<sup>th</sup> regnal year of Gajapati emperor Prataprudra Deva, corresponding to A.D. 1535, has mentioned about the birth place of Jayadeva, his stay at Puri and the composition of the *Gitagovinda* which is reproduced below :

<i>Vipra se Jayadeva nama</i>	<i>ksetrabaraku agamana</i>
<i>Kenduli sasana ta grama</i>	<i>prachi nadira tate puna</i>
<i>Niali Madhava samipe</i>	<i>bhagati kala nanarupe</i>
<i>Sastra purane vichaksana</i>	<i>kavitva marge tara mana</i>
<i>Gita se rachivi voila</i>	<i>ksetravasaku mana dela</i>
<i>Srijaganathara samipe</i>	<i>suddha sattvika matibhave</i>
<i>Rachila srigitagovinda</i>	<i>labhila parama ananda</i>
X                      X	X                      X

*Gitagovinda nata seva*  
*Raja se seva bhiaila*  
*Srigitagovinda rasa e*  
*Boli kalaka e bhiana*

*mandire pratyaha hoila*  
*kenduli sadhi yogaila*  
*sri jagannathara priya e*  
*bhagate hele tosamana*

(Chapter – II pp, 8-10)

The above verses mean : Jayadeva, a resident of Kenduli Sasana on the bank of the river Prachi, not very far from Niali and Madhava, had come to Puri, the abode of Lord Jagannatha. He was a great scholar conversant with all other *Sastras* and *Puranas* and was poetically minded. His *Gitagovinda* was read and enlisted as *Nataseva* in the temple of Lord Jagannatha. The king had ordered for the *Gitagovinda Nataseva* and also arranged for *Kenduli Sadhi* to be used in the service of the Lord.

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